



Educator Training

Environmental Education and Training Program

Introduction

Under Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awards a multi-year cooperative agreement to a consortia of universities and nonprofit organizations to deliver training and related support to education professionals (e.g., K-12 teachers, nonformal educators, and state and local education and natural resource officials). The ultimate goal of the program is to increase the public's ability to make responsible environmental decisions by providing training on how to develop and implement quality environmental education (EE) programs. Through this



program, EPA and its partners also seek to advance the field of EE by demonstrating how EE can help achieve state and local goals for education reform, improving training opportunities for educators who work with low-income and culturally-diverse audiences, and using the latest Internet technology. This fact sheet describes the evolution of this program and its accomplishments.

NCEET products:



“EE Toolbox” — Resource materials for teachers and trainers. Obtain the “EE Toolbox” by contacting Kendall-Hunt Publishing at 1-800-228-0810. Some units are available on “EE-Link.”

“EE-Link” — Internet site containing EE information and resource materials. Visit “EE-Link” on the World Wide Web at <http://eelink.net/>

National Consortium for Environmental Education and Training (NCEET)

The first phase of the training program was initiated in 1992 with a three-year award of \$5.4 million to the National Consortium for Environmental Education and Training (NCEET) led by the University of Michigan. During this phase, NCEET accomplished the following:

- **Needs assessment** — Conducted research to assess EE training needs.
- **“EE Toolbox”** — Developed the “EE Toolbox” of resource materials for teachers and trainers on such topics as how to design effective workshops, approach environmental issues in the classroom, integrate EE into the school curriculum, reach urban audiences, use community resources and computers in the classroom, and evaluate EE materials.
- **Training** — Provided training for teachers and teacher trainers.
- **“EE-Link”** — Increased access to EE information and resource materials through “EE-Link” which is an electronic database linked to other sources of information through the Internet.

Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP)

EPA initiated the second phase of the program with a five-year award of \$9 million in 1995 to a consortium of nonprofit organizations and universities led by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE). The current program builds upon and includes the work initiated by NCEET and is called the Environmental Education and Training Partnership (EETAP). EETAP expects to deliver training to over 75,000 teachers and other education professionals. The program focuses on the activities discussed below.

Program Activities

- **Training** — Delivering training to teachers and other education professionals primarily by building on established training programs.
- **Access to quality EE information and materials** — Improving access to quality EE materials by 1) expanding and linking existing EE databases through “EE-Link,” the ERIC Clearinghouse for Science, Mathematics and EE, and the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse; and 2) developing and disseminating three sets of guidelines for EE materials, learner outcomes for grades 4, 8, and 12, and educator preparation.
- **Partnerships** — Sustaining training efforts over the long term by strengthening partnerships and networks.

EETAP partners include:

Council for EE/Project WILD
EE-Link
NAAEE
National Project WET
Northern Illinois University
Ohio State University
Project del Rio
Project Learning Tree
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
WestEd



EETAP is advancing the EE field by:



- Building state-level capacity to sustain EE over the long-term
- Linking EE to education reform goals
- Reaching diverse audiences, including educators who teach students and communities of color
- Improving the quality of EE through guidelines
- Improving access to EE information and materials through the Internet
- Strengthening partnerships to leverage resources and reduce duplication

Core Themes

Through this training program, EPA and EETAP are striving to improve and advance the field of EE by integrating several “core themes” throughout the program:

- **State-level capacity building** — Supporting the “infrastructure” needed to develop leaders and organizations that can ensure the coordinated delivery of comprehensive EE programs statewide.
- **Education reform** — Using good quality EE, which emphasizes the development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills and the use of sound science, as a catalyst to advance state and local goals to improve student learning.
- **Diversity** — Reaching traditionally underserved education professionals (e.g., nonformal educators, high school teachers, educators who work with low-income and culturally diverse audiences, and state and local education and natural resource officials).

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- **Quality** — Improving the quality of EE through the development and dissemination of the EE guidelines discussed above and improving communication on what constitutes good quality EE (e.g., programs that develop analytical and critical-thinking skills, are scientifically sound, are relevant to the real world, and do not advocate a specific position).
 - **Technology** — Making use of the latest Internet technology to enhance and link existing EE databases to give educators greater access to EE information and resource materials.
 - **Synergy** — Promoting partnerships among key EE providers within EETAP and between EETAP and others in the field to leverage resources, improve efficiency, and reduce duplication of effort.



For additional information,
visit the EETAP home page on the World Wide Web at
<http://www.eetap.org>



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